

**HITCHIN COMITTEE
8 SEPTEMBER 2015**

PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

AGENDA ITEM No.

9

TITLE OF INFORMATION NOTE: BANCROFT RECREATION GROUND

INFORMATION NOTE OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER SERVICES

1. SUMMARY

- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the current situation for the delivery of incremental affordable improvements to Bancroft Recreation Ground based on the principles outlined in the most recent version of the master plan set out in the report to Cabinet on 28 January 2014 as attached at appendix A.

2. STEPS TO DATE

- 2.1 In order to keep Members updated the Chairman of the Hitchin Area Committee has included an information note on Bancroft Recreation Ground as a regular item on the agenda for Hitchin Area Committee.
- 2.2 At its meeting of the 16 December 2014 Cabinet resolved at item 13 - BANCROFT RECREATION GROUND, HITCHIN:
- (1) That a phased approach to deliver incremental affordable improvements to Bancroft Recreation Ground based on the principles outlined in the most recent version of the master plan set out in the report to Cabinet on 28 January 2014 be agreed, using Section 106 and other limited internal and external financial resources;
 - (2) That, subject to the approval of a revenue growth bid of £15,000 per annum, the inclusion of a water splash park and associated toilet/baby changing provision for Bancroft Recreation Ground in the Capital Programme for 2015/16 be agreed; and
 - (3) That the limited incremental improvements for Bancroft recreation ground be incorporated into the Green Space Management Strategy Work Programme and, in consultation with relevant Portfolio Holders, be managed by officers without the need of a Project Board
- 2.3 At the Hitchin Area Committee meeting of the 14th July 2015 at item 7, Members received an information note advising them that:

2.4 Water Splash Park

2.4.1 The tender process is now in place and progressing according to the agreed timetable as per the table below

2.4.2 Four companies with a proven track record in the provision of water splash parks have been selected to tender for the works and the table below identifies key tasks and dates.

Key Tasks	Date to be completed by
Tender Documentation Issued	Complete
Closing Date for Tender Queries	Complete
Closing Date for Query Responses back to Tenderers	Complete
Closing Date for Tenders to be Returned	Complete
Tender Evaluation Completion Date	7 th August 2015
Notification of Intention to Award	13 th August 2015
Contract Award	28 th August 2015
Start of Construction	21 st September 2015
Completion of Works	April 2016
Operate Water Splash Park	May 2016

2.5 Toilet / Baby Changing Facility

2.5.1 Officers from the Council's Property Service Department continue to seek quotations for the toilet /baby changing facility which will be located in the disused wing of bowls pavilion. This will be open for use during the operational season of the water splash park (May –Sept).

2.6 Public Tennis Courts

2.6.1 Officers continue to investigate possible options for the courts including, repair / replacement of a single tennis court, removal of the courts and the provision of a new Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) large enough to contain 2 netball / tennis courts.

2.6.2 Groundwork Hertfordshire have commenced work to develop a specification for a MUGA and to investigate possible external funding sources.

2.6.3 Once all the information is available officers will make recommendations for consideration in accordance with the adopted master plan.

2.7 Hitchin Lawn Tennis Club

2.7.1 Dialogue with the Hitchin Tennis Club is ongoing but there are no significant matters to update upon at this point.

3. INFORMATION TO NOTE

3.1 Water Splash Park

- 3.1.1 Four tenders were received detailing their proposals for the water splash parks. These have been evaluated and the contract award was made on the 28th August 2015. A verbal update of the successful tenderer and their design will be provided at the meeting.
- 3.1.2 The timetable shown above in 2.4.2 is on target and the tenderer has confirmed they will commence work on site by the 21st September 2015 and the facility will be in operation in May 2016.

3.2 Toilet / Baby Changing Facility

- 3.2.1 Confirmation has been received from the Council's Property Services Department that plans are on target to have the Toilet / Baby Changing Facility operational for next spring.

3.3 Public Tennis Courts

Groundwork Hertfordshire have provided quotations for the provision of a new MUGA large enough to contain 2 netball / tennis courts on the footprint of the lower Bowling Green. These range in price from £101,500 - £160,000. Groundwork Hertfordshire have also identified that an application could be made to 'Sport England Inspired Facilities' to fund up to 50% of the cost of the works.

Estimates have also been received for the removal of the closed public tennis courts and consideration is being given to this alongside the possible provision of a MUGA and lease discussion detailed in 3.4.

3.4 Hitchin Lawn Tennis Club

The lease has been extended to March 2016. This will allow time to consider wider options for the Recreation Ground such as the possible provision of a MUGA that could cater for public tennis courts and have an impact on the Council's requirement that the tennis club needs to make their courts more publically available.

3.5 Options appraisal

- 3.5.1 Based on Cabinets resolution of the 16 December 2014 (*That a phased approach to deliver incremental affordable improvements to Bancroft Recreation Ground based on the principles outlined in the most recent version of the master plan set out in the report to Cabinet on 28 January 2014 be agreed, using Section 106 and other limited internal and external financial resources*) the information included at 3.3 in this report along with additional options for funding elements of the Master Plan is being included in an options report that will initially be considered by Officers in conjunction with the Executive Member.
- 3.5.2 The existing master plan and proposals was developed through consultation. Future consultation on individual proposals will generally take place through the update notes to the Hitchin Area Committee. Any significant deviations from the previously agreed master plan will need Cabinet approval.

4. NEXT STEPS

4.1 These are described in paragraph 3 of this report.

5. APPENDICES

5.1 Appendix A: Approved Master Plan

6. CONTACT OFFICERS

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7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 16th December 2014 Cabinet report & resolutions item 13. (Available on NHDC web site)